US Army Corps of Engineers®
New York District

THE PORT AUTHORITY OF NY & NJ

Woodbridge Creek Restoration and Mitigation Project

Project Facts

Fifty acres of degraded wetlands located at Woodbridge Creek, in Woodbridge, New Jersey, have been selected for restoration efforts by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. The site has been provided by the Township of Woodbridge and the New Jersey Turnpike Authority.

The Corps and the Port Authority will be restoring approximately 23 acres of tidal wetlands with an additional 27 acres being set aside for state preservation. A variety of more than 240,000 marsh plants will be replanted. This restoration work will offset potential, unavoidable shallow water habitat impacts related to the deepening of the Port of New York and New Jersey.

In coordination with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), the project also allows for the restoration of 17.5 acres of tidal wetlands to provide compensatory restoration for the 1990 Exxon Bayway Oil Spill. The combined sites, including preservation areas, total nearly 70 acres and will be set aside as a wetland conservation area for the State of New Jersey.

Currently the Corps, along with the Port Authority, is deepening key shipping channels in the Harbor to ensure safe and efficient navigation. In addition to ensuring a safe, efficient Port, the Corps and its partners are working to maintain a healthy, diverse and sustainable environment through the creation, enhancement and restoration of aquatic, wetland and upland habitat.

On Feb. 17, 2006, the Corps awarded a $4.3 million contract to Rencor Inc. of New Jersey to undertake the construction associated with the restoration of the wetlands at the Corps and Port Authority site. On June 14, 2006 the Corps exercised the $2 million NOAA/NJDEP option for restoration, bringing the total project cost to nearly $6.4 million. The wetland area selected for restoration by the Corps has historically functioned as a salt marsh dominated by a diversity of vegetation. In recent years, areas of the site have been filled and the invasive form of *Phragmites australis*, or common reed, has overrun the site. As a result, the site receives less tidal inundation and has experienced a loss of plant and animal diversity.

Restoration objectives include:

- Creating and restoring habitats for native bird, wildlife and fish species
- Providing a nursery for juvenile fish species
- Removing fill from within the wetland
- Restoring tidal hydrology to the site
- Re-grading the site to elevations that can support native marsh vegetation.

The four agencies will continue to work cooperatively throughout the life of the two projects monitoring the site closely to ensure the restoration is successful and sustainable.

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